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#n 10/826,883
221-0078US

DEC 12 2006

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly distinguish the cam-based engagement mechanism of the claimed junction plate from the junction plates of the prior art that employ jack screws to effect plate movement.

Claim 7 was cancelled in the amendment submitted June 12, 2006.

Rejections under §102

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 – 10 under §102(e) [*sic*; §102(b)?] as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,350,492 to Carpenter. The Office Action contends that element 32 of Carpenter is a cam actuator and that element 27 is a cam carrier with at least one cam follower 28.

The steam joint described in Carpenter uses two gear-driven jack screws to adjust a packing gland. Unlike the claimed invention, it has no cams, cam actuators, cam carriers or cam followers.

A further advantage of the construction described herein is that when the casting 1 is rotating with the journal 6 and it is desired to tighten the packing gland 28, this may be accomplished in a simple and convenient manner by merely holding the normally revolving hand wheel 32 stationary for a sufficient period of time so that the resulting rotation of the traveling pinions 20 will act through the screw shafts 21 and sleeves 25 to force the gland 28 against the packing material 29. [col. 3; line 64 through col. 4; line 5]

Element 32 of Carpenter is a geared hand wheel. It does not actuate a cam. Rather it drives two pinions 20 “fixed to diametrically opposed screw shafts 21” – i.e., it drives the jack screws. Elements 27 of Carpenter are lugs “projecting outwardly from a packing gland 28.” Elements 27 do not carry a cam. Element 28 does not follow a cam.

The flange 13 is fastened to journal 6 by stud bolts 18 and forms, with the flange 14 and web 15, an annular groove or channel 14 containing a pair of pinions 20 fixed to diametrically opposed screw shafts 21 journaled in bearing openings 22 and 23 provided in flanges 13 and 14. Screw threaded portions 21a of shafts 21 project outwardly through the bearing openings 23 and have sleeves 25 threaded thereon. The sleeves 25 are rotatably secured in openings 26 provided in lugs 27 projecting outwardly from a

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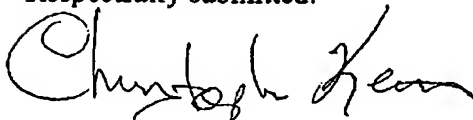
packing gland 28 which is fitted in the open end of the stuffing box 16 and serves to compress the packing material 29 which is arranged in the stuffing box in sealing contact with the outer surface of the stationary steam supply pipe 9. The pinions 20 mesh with a ring gear 31 which is fitted in the channel 19 and is carried by a rotatably mounted hand wheel 32. The ring gear 28 works in a guide slot 34 formed by and between the inner side edges of two channel covering guide rings 35 and 36 which are fastened by studs 31 to the outer peripheral edges of flanges 13 and 14 so that they overlie the channel 19. The hand wheel 32 is provided with oppositely directed bearing flanges 39 and 40 which ride the outer surface of rings 35 and 36.

As hereinafter explained the hand wheel 32, ring gear 31, pinions 20 and sleeves 23 provide accessible and convenient means for adjusting the packing gland 29 while the casting 7 is rotating with journal 6. [col. 2; lines 1-32]

Each of claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 – 10 requires a cam actuator and a cam carrier having at least one cam follower. These elements are not present in the steam joint described in Carpenter. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 – 10 are not anticipated by Carpenter.

For the reasons stated above, it is submitted that claims 1, 2, 4 and 9 – 10 are allowable over the cited reference. Reconsideration of the rejection is requested.

Respectfully submitted:



Christopher D. Keirs
Reg. No. 32,248
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Wong Cabello Lutsch Rutherford & Brucculeri LLP
20333 State Hwy. 249 Suite 600
Houston, TX 77070
832 446-2406
Fax: 832 446-2424
ckeirs@counselip.com